The COMMONWEAL

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Holy Week, Easter and a Torn World

PERHAPS even over here the Masses and other ceremonies of Holy Week rather than Easter itself this year seemed more in tune with a Christianity suffering in so many of its members. There are in the Gospel accounts of the Passion, in the supplications, psalms and dirges of Tenebrae, the adoration of the Cross, the blessing of the Baptismal font and other corporate ceremonies, depths of sadness and at the same time, consolation, appropriate for a time of war and poverty. And when the Good Friday Mass of the Presanctified is rendered in all its vigor, beauty and drama, as it is in New York in the Capuchin Church of St. John the Baptist (happily one of many), the impact of the Church's liturgy is overwhelming. An adequate realization of the full meaning of the Passion is an essential preliminary for participation in the Easter alleluias. More than any Easter of recent years the joy of the festival of Christ's victory over death is dimmed by the tragedies current in many parts of the world. The Holy Father felt constrained to devote much of his Easter message to a plea for peace and unity and a moving appeal that combatants spare women and children and open towns. In the Holy Land itself it is ominous to note that vast numbers of Australian and British soldiers on watch were the most prominent feature of the local scene. Reliving this most sacred period of the whole Christian year underlines the importance of reliving the full cycle of Advent, Birth, Crucifixion and Redemption in Mass and Office. An increasing number of laymen are doing this in concert with priests and religious. Publishers report growing demand for Missal and "Day Hours." And two new books to help the work along are about to appear—one a short course in Latin based on the text of the Mass, the other on corporate worship, and advocating, among other things, a more extensive use of the vernacular at daily and Sunday Mass.

Importance of Corporate Worship

Canada Votes

THE CANADIAN election declares in terms that will hold up for several years that Canadians like the way their government has been carrying on the war. Less evidently, and perhaps even less consciously, it seems to mean two other things. The people who really lost the election worst of all are the small, independent parties—Social Credit, CCF and others—which controlled well over ten percent of the seats in the old house. At present writing it looks as though their strength had been more than cut in half. That is too bad. For however much one might disagree with their policies, at least these parties represent a healthy opposition to the prevailing conservatism in the Dominion. The victory of Mackenzie King, echoing that of the Liberals in their Quebec Provincial election last fall, probably indicates that the electorate wants Canada to retain full independent bargaining rights in the Empire, and be a real power in the final settlement. A "National Government" victory would have meant an integration of Canadian effort into that of the mother country so complete and undifferentiated that Canada's position would have been weakened in whatever negotiations will follow the war. This way Canada will help—perhaps as much as it would any other way—but as a quasi-sovereign power rather than as a dutiful child rushing to the help of its imperial parent. That is probably, in the long run, a good thing.

Obvious and Not So Obvious

Mexican Lines Scrambled Again

IN THE campaign for the Mexican presidency, the lines, until recently, have seemed unusually clear. The two dominant candidates, Avila Camacho and Andreu Almazan, were both conducting a more conservative campaign than has been popular in Mexican politics during recent years. The more conservative of the two, Almazan, was making headway which observers thought might give him a fairly clear popular victory, although it might take quite a

Trouble Seems Certain

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remarkable victory to show through the election apparatus as controlled by the P.R.M. It might at least put him in a position to conduct a revolt against the régime of the Party of the Mexican Revolution with great chance of success. Camacho is the government and party candidate and presumably has the support of Cardenas, but Almazan seemed to be splitting the party and the labor movement and the agrarian movement. Camacho's tactic was to start a backfire, stressing his own conservatism and thus undermine Almazan's protest-conservative support, and he was apparently having fair success.

It is interesting that this trend is reflected very directly in the education issue. All the bishops and archbishops of Mexico together published a pastoral letter on January 12, opposing the new Education Law. They recognized that the new law is less bad than was the one of 1934, but they showed how this mitigated one still is basically unsatisfactory on four points. They counsel the clergy and people to pray, to strive with solicitude to save the souls of children and youths and "to persevere without, with Christian constancy, and in the most efficacious manner to obtain suitable modification of the legal dispositions in matters of education. This firm, organized and constant activity must exclude all unjust violence which is contrary to the Christian spirit and, usually, makes worse the evils that it seeks to remedy; it must be within the law for it is proper to a Christian to respect the civil authority in the terms laid down by the Church; and, finally, it must be serene since in this world there is no force comparable with serenity, especially if it is in the service of a noble cause."

Two new moves have just been made which throw the picture out of clear focus: the previously dormant candidate, Rafael Sandez Tapia, has come to life and proclaimed himself the "candidate of the Mestizo Indians"—thus bringing in a new person and the racial issue. Cardenas has delivered a hard blow to the Camacho conservative appeal by confiscating 1,500,000 acres of chicle land from three American corporations, without compensation, on the claim that the original private title to the land, obtained in 1886 by those who sold to the Americans, was illegal.

You can make out a good case to show that these moves will aid Almazan or Camacho, and so were engineered by one or the other. In any case it grows increasingly inevitable that private and governmental pressures from the United States, as usual, will be about as powerful as anything in deciding who will rule as next president of Mexico. Whatever Americans want, this country is involved in the situation. Our action or our inaction will be a factor of prime importance, and neither action nor inaction will necessarily be just or altruistic or good neighborly.

An Honest Speech in the Philippines

American Duty

READERS in the Philippines are wondering what sort of a world their country will enter as an independent nation in 1946. No stranger period in history could be selected for an experiment in independence. Except where it is menaced or abolished by force, the national unit everywhere is attracted by the idea of solidarity, compelled by the fact of interdependence, to envisage a future federative system. In a courageous and realistic speech this week, President Manuel Quezon of the Philippines placed the facts before his people. He admitted that he had lost all confidence in the ability of the Filipinos to defend their country against aggression by a major power. He marked the validity of a strong and regional spirit: "Let any conqueror come. We may be under his power for another 300 years, as under Spain, but the day will come when the Filipino people will emerge triumphant." But he accepted the risk of foreign invasion as preferable to continuing the present relations with the United States beyond 1946, if only because "under existing conditions, with the powers of the Commonwealth restricted by those retained by the President and the Congress, the Philippines cannot shape her national economy." The Filipinos will have to decide whether or not they will accept independence, but they should not be forced to take that decision while a determining and unjust element weighs upon their choice. We have offered political independence: the logical first step is to give the Philippines economic freedom by granting the right to make trade treaties claimed by President Quezon, so that their choice can be more really free.

Airplanes and War Economy

Abandoned Productive Efforts

IN THE neutrality debates the question was what would take us into war, what would keep us out of war. But from the start it has been obvious that war would create a problem for us at home. In the first two months of 1940 we have actually exported to France, Great Britain, Canada and Australia some 34 million dollars worth of war industry goods and have authorized about $128,000,000. This stimulates a certain sector of our economy but it affects very gravely our political attitude toward the reform and control of our economy as a whole. An instance may serve to show a trend. The increase in the construction of military airplanes for export, the use of foreign orders as a backlog for our airplane industry are welcomed by the industry, naturally enough, by the army and navy (in spite of detail objection to the release of new models), by many

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people in the Administration and by all those who relate the heaping up of war potential to the idea of American grandeur. But we can see already that this stimulus of export is leading us to neglect the social and economic problems which until the war we were trying to solve. If private and foreign spending on essentially non-productive goods is going to be considered a way out of our troubles, then we are drifting into a war basis economy. We will not have to wait for M Day to know what living on that basis means in terms of abandoned productive efforts.

There Must Be More Imports

THE SENATORIAL fuss about extending the Administration's reciprocal trade treaty powers calls attention to the country's greatest trade need. The United States must increase her imports. The Hull system is good in that it builds up our imports. But it does not bring us nearly enough foreign goods. Scattered cries of alarm have greeted various news items on the piling up of two-thirds of the world gold in the barren Kentucky foothills, but the public does not listen. Debates still rage on how to build up our exports, when even the veriest monetary amateur can see that the United States must leave enough gold circulating outside our borders to keep from being left holding the biggest and hottest gold brick in all history. As we go to press the latest figures show the highest American foreign export balance since 1928. Unless planned imports are inaugurated on a large scale we shall soon be in such a fix that it will never more be possible for even the most gullible to use the phrase, a "favorable balance of trade."

Rude Awakening Due

New York Employers Shift Their Accent

THE PRACTICE widely prevalent among employers of putting the "accent on youth" in doing their hiring has had such serious consequences for every class involved that the New York State legislature three years ago appointed a committee to investigate. The work has just been concluded, with the presentation of a last report covering some very important findings. The situation is found, in general, to be improving; whether because sociologists, economists and publicists have done such a good work of protest, or whether because the practice of taking in the young and letting out the mature whenever possible, being unsound and mischievous all around, has already begun to correct itself—in any event, the prejudice against older employees is found to be giving way before "a strong trend . . . in favor of recognizing the older workers' potentialities." Certainly, unless employers are willing to dispense with experienced skill, responsibility and stability, it is inevitable that the employee class chiefly possessing these qualifications should come back into its own. The legislative report goes on to perform an even more positive service for the older worker by dismissing in strong and specific terms the charge that he costs more in terms of workmen's compensation, calling the charge "a prejudice without foundation . . . [which] must be exposed by the widest sort of publicity." A further constructive recommendation is that employers everywhere make a serious effort to reflect in their employee rolls the actual age proportions among the employables in their particular communities. Finally, the committee has not forgotten youth itself. That it is serving youth in attempting to correct the bad balance which would make the youthful worker support both himself and his unemployed elders is self-evident. But it also utters the concrete warning that no deliberate pressure should be exerted upon employers in favor of older workers simply as a class, since such pressure would produce "senseless discrimination against youth."

Hope for Older Workers

Top Price for a Smile

A NEWS STORY of probably negligible sociological significance, but making uncommonly pleasant reading, transpires from the small, strongly individual state of Rhode Island. Incidentally, this story upsets a couple of ideas never before seriously questioned: one, that Hollywood and the magazine-cover artists pay the best price for sunny smiles; the other, that the WPA is a drab and rayless thing, with no color or character of its own. In Rhode Island, hard by some extensive WPA project or other, lives a girl (so the story runs) with a very sunny smile indeed which she uses to lighten up her immediate neighborhood. Pursuant to this old-fashioned policy, she has made it a point for the past year to stand at her window each morning and smile and wave at every one of the forty trucks of WPA workers which rolled past. Just before Easter of this year, however, the trucks did not roll past. They came to a full stop, disgorging twenty men apiece, a total of 800, who approached her house in a body. While they looked on approvingly, their spokesman handed the astonished girl a whole series of Easter tokens —lilies, a basket of confections, Easter eggs and a purse with money in it—while he made the following speech: "You waved at us every day for a year. You're the little girl in the window. You don't know us and we don't know you, but you're a bright light as we pass by. Now, good-bye and a happy Easter." We have seen distinctly worse things in many anthologies.

Poem by WPA

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Docility and Authority

The author of "How to Read a Book" tells of a few of his own failures—and draws a moral.

By Mortimer Adler

IN HIS Treatise on Temperance, Saint Thomas discusses the virtue of studiousness and the vice of curiosity. The virtuous pursuit of learning must not only be moderate, but rightly motivated. *Studiositas* inclines a man to be serious and steadfast in the application of his mind to things worth learning. In contrast, the zest with which many men devote themselves to scholarship and research seems to express curiosity rather than a virtuous exercise of the desire to know.

Now there is another virtue—not explicitly mentioned by Saint Thomas—which disciplines us in the life of learning. Docility is the virtue which regulates a man's will with respect to learning from a teacher. Studiousness concerns a right attitude toward subject-matters. If men learned only by discovery—each seeking out the truth entirely by himself—studiousness would be sufficient. But men also learn by instruction; in fact, that is the way most men learn for the most part. Therefore, they must adopt a right attitude toward their teachers, to the instruments as well as to the matter of instruction. It is through docility that we recognize the teacher as a doctor, and respect his authority as we respect that of a physician working for our health.

I place docility in the group of virtues annexed to justice, for it consists in rendering to teachers what is their due. As we owe piety to God as the source of our being, and to our parents as the source of our becoming, so docility is a kind of piety toward teachers as among the sources of our learning. There is also an element of gratitude in docility, responsive to the charity of teaching; and an element of humility, because through docility we are rightly ordered to our superiors. We cannot be instructed by our peers, or at least not in the respects in which there is peerage or equality in knowledge. Unless the teacher has an authority which comes from greater knowledge or skill, he cannot justly be our *master,* nor need we be docile as his *disciples.*

In order to define the vices of excess and defects—which I shall call *subservience* and *indocility*—it is necessary to discuss the nature of the doctoral authority. When Saint Thomas says that "the argument from authority based on human reason is the weakest" (*S. T.,* I,1,8,ad 2), he is obviously not recommending indocility, for that would belie the practice of his whole life as a respectful and grateful student of Aristotle and Saint Augustine. What he is saying is simply that the weakest ground for affirming a conclusion is the fact that it has been affirmed by another, even if that other be the master of those that know or a father of doctrine. If we affirm a principle that is supposed to be self-evident, without its being evident to us, or a conclusion that is supposed to be demonstrated, without being able to demonstrate it, merely because another man has said it, we are being subservient, not docile. We have acquired an opinion, not knowledge; and if we persist in it through a sort of verbal memory, rather than a truly intellectual penetration of the truth, we have been indoctrinated, not instructed.

But, then, wherein lies the authority of teachers? We must distinguish between the intrinsic possession of such authority and its extrinsic signs. With respect to all teachable matters, a man has as much authority intrinsically as he is able to speak the truth. Strictly, it is the truth alone which has the authority over our minds in the realm of knowledge as opposed to the realm of opinion. Whereas opinion is an affirmation by the intellect as moved by the will or the passions, knowledge is a motion independent of the will. To know is to judge entirely in the light of reason. The truth as we see it in such light compels our judgment. If the authority of a teacher consisted in nothing but the truth he spoke, then we could justly recognize his authority only to the extent that, by the natural light of our own reason, we could independently discriminate between truth and falsity on the point of doctrine. There would be no need for docility toward him as a man.

The need for docility

The need for docility arises from the supposition that a student lacks knowledge or the skill to get it and that a teacher, having what the student lacks, can help him. Although the student must never accept what the teacher says *simply because he says it,* neither can he reject it on that ground. In the field of natural knowledge, the student must ultimately make up his own mind in the light of natural reason, but until he is able to do that finally he should try to get all the help

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he can from those who offer to teach him. Docility is needed, therefore, to dispose him to seek and to use such help wisely and well. If a teacher claims to demonstrate something which the student cannot see at once to be the case, docility requires that the student suspend judgment—neither accept nor reject—and apply his mind studiously to the teacher's words and intentions. He must, with patience and perseverence, continue to submit his mind to instruction, which means nothing more than that he suffer the teacher to continue cooperating with his own active intellect.

Unless there were extrinsic signs of authority, which marked the proper objects of docility, the student would be unable to direct himself properly with respect to available instruction. Such signs are not wanting. Assuming that an educational system is wisely administered, those who hold the office of teacher are signified as having sufficient authority for the grade of student allotted to them. Unlike the political office, which has a certain authority in itself even when held by a bad man, the doctoral office is truly emptied whenever students who have exercised docility discover its occupant to be unworthy. If the *de facto* rule of a usurping despot is tyranny, the *de facto* pressure of an inadequate teacher can only be effective as indoctrination, and that, as we have seen, is a kind of violence. Docility requires the student, nevertheless, to respect the office of the teacher until his incompetence is unmistakably revealed.

There are other extrinsic signs. Quite apart from his office, a teacher may command respect because of past performances. A teacher who has succeeded in bringing us to the light many times in the past despite our intransigeance, is one who deserves our patience in the present instance where we are still in the dark. This is the mark which honors the great teachers of all times. In the tradition of European learning, some men have been the teachers of many generations, of many epochs. The fact that these men are so generally honored by the tradition as great teachers—men who both know and can communicate—is the most compelling extrinsic sign of an authority to which we must respond with docility.

I have elsewhere developed the distinction between dead and living teachers. The living teachers—the local embodiments of learning—are seldom the great teachers. The great teachers are usually dead, though, in another sense, they are eminently alive for us as teachers through their books. Books are instruments of instruction, and obviously call for docility in those who would learn from them, as much as living teachers do. The virtue is essentially the same, whether exercised toward the book of an absent teacher or toward the ministrations of one who is present. When I speak of a "great teacher" or a "great book" I mean one who merits the extrinsic marks of teaching authority because possessing that authority intrinsically, by virtue of a great store of knowledge and great power to disseminate it.

It would be a mistake for those of us who are teachers to suppose that the problem of achieving docility is a problem only for our students. To the extent that we, too, are students, the moral problem exists for us as well. It exists for anyone and everyone who is actively engaged in the life of learning. Those who understand the obligations of that life do not give up learning when they begin to teach. On the contrary, a good teacher is usually one who is himself an active student of the subject-matter in which he gives instruction. Authority and docility will be combined in him, for he is both a teacher of those who know less than himself and a student of the masters of his subject-matter. One might even guess that there will be a certain proportion between his attainment to authority and his exercise of docility.

Docility for all of us

I want to consider the problem of docility as it exists for all of us, whether we be merely students in the early stages of our education, or teachers who have realized the need to continue study. The problem, it seems to me, has significant implications for education under modern cultural conditions, precisely because modern culture is so ambivalent about tradition. In its horror of subservience, the modern mind tends to the opposite vice of brash indocility. On the other hand, those who deplore modernism and try to combat it too often return to the first extreme, mistaking subservience for docility.

The opposition of these extremes is the prevailing tension between the mood of secular and Catholic education. These two systems of education have contrary vices, each a reaction to the other—too little or too much respect for traditional authorities. I might add that the attitude which is characteristic of secular or Catholic faculties toward the great teachers of the past is reflected in the attitude of secular or Catholic students toward their living teachers. The one is usually indocile, the other subservient. (The subservience may be merely outward. I speak only of appearances.)

The temper of a culture with respect to its intellectual tradition underlies its educational efforts. If docility is indispensable to sound educational policy and practice, we must rectify the culture itself in terms of this virtue. How shall this be done? We are frequently told that historical scholarship is the way. We are told that the proper study of philosophy, and even science, is impossible without thorough historical orientation. Both modernism and its equally bad oppo-

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site, "modern scholasticism," spring from corrupt history, or the lack of historical insight. In their enthusiasm, the exponents of history as the magic sesame tend to identify the historical attitude with docility. They soon become infected with historicism, which is simply the error of making historical scholarship, truly enough a necessary condition of rectitude in learning from the past, into a sufficient condition.

I propose, therefore, to examine the service of history in the life of learning, by considering its relation to the achievement of docility. But before I can discuss these larger implications of the problem, it is necessary first to consider docility from the point of view of the individual person who is trying to be virtuous in his attitude toward teachers and books.

For most of the moral virtues, the mean between the extremes of excess and defect is a subjective mean. The mean in the case of courage, lying somewhere between foolhardiness and cowardice, is not objectively ascertainable, and as such the same for all men. It is rather a mean that is relative to the individual temperament of each man who tries to be courageous, a mean which a man's own prudence must appoint after due consideration of the conditions of his life, the complexion of all his natural tendencies, and the circumstances of particular acts.

The mean of docility is subjective in this sense. The definition of docility as the right amount of respect for the authority of teachers (or books) is by itself insufficient to determine action. It is a truth too remote from the exigencies of practice to direct us in the particular decisions we have to make. In this particular case—with this teacher or book, in view of my temperamental weaknesses, my tendencies to be indolent or impatient, and in connection with this point of doctrine about which I have strong feelings—what is the *right amount* of respect due those who are trying to instruct me? There is the practical question. And I cannot cultivate the habit of docility unless I can decide such questions prudently time after time as they arise.

Aristotle gives us two practical rules to guide us in the casuistry of applying moral principles to particular cases of action.

> As it is difficult to hit the mean exactly, we must take the second best course, and choose the lesser of two evils, and this we shall do best in the way we have described, i.e., by steering clear of the evil which is further from the mean. We must also observe the things to which we are ourselves particularly prone, as different natures have different inclinations, and we may ascertain what these are by a consideration of our feelings of pleasure and pain. And then we must drag ourselves in the direction opposite to them; for it is by removing ourselves as far as possible from what is wrong that we shall arrive at the mean, as we do when we pull a crooked stick straight" ("Nichomachean Ethics," II, 9).

Let us consider the second suggestion first. If by temperament we tend to be impatient of authority, we should pull ourselves in the direction of subservience, for by so doing we shall be going toward the mean. If our temperament is of the opposite sort, we should struggle against our reluctance to exercise an independent judgment. Such counteraction of our natural weaknesses assists us to make a prudent determination of the mean relative to ourselves.

But if the mean of docility is hard to hit exactly, which is the better error to make, the worse vice to avoid, subservience or indocility? I, for one, cannot answer this question *absolutely*, that is, without any reference to circumstances. But it can be answered *relatively* by considering the generality of cases of different type. Thus, I would say that for modern culture generally the aim should be to avoid indocility; for Catholic students, in contrast to those in our secular colleges, the motion should be away from subservience; and, in general, it is worse for those who are in the early stages of study to be indocile than subservient, whereas, on the contrary, for those who are mature and who should assume a responsibility of independent judgment proportionate to their competence, it is worse to be subservient.

The casuistical question which a man faces in trying to be docile are more difficult than those whch arise in the field of other moral virtues; but these are always the most difficult questions, not only for each of us to decide for ourselves, but for anyone to prescribe ways of answering for others. Perhaps, therefore, the best thing I can do is to put down some of the considerations which weigh heavily with me when I am trying to read a book with docility.

In the first place, I try never to forget that the only ultimate factor which can decide my judgment —whether I shall agree or disagree with the author who is my teacher—is the natural light of my own reason. Remembering this, I will not assent to anything I do not see, be it principle or conclusion or the reasoning from the one to the other. I know, of course, how often I have failed to abide by this precept, how often I have adopted, for example, statements by Aristotle or Saint Thomas, because of emotional predispositions rather than intellectual light. I respect them so much as teachers that I have often permitted them to indoctrinate me—the fault being mine, not theirs, the respect being excessive, rather than right. For many years, I affirmed, and repeated to my students as if I knew it to be true, the Aristotelian error about natural slavery. If it is the error I now see it to be, it could not have been a truth I saw. As I review my own life on this point, I realize

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that I never did *see* the point. I merely accepted it because Aristotle had spoken.

In matters of natural knowledge, no human authority should prevail against the light of your own reason. But we know that our thinking is fallible. We know how often we suffer the illusion that we see the truth, only to discover later that we have judged too soon. Hence the second maxim I try to follow is this: one should suspend judgment long enough to be sure that one really understands what the teacher is trying to say before agreeing or disagreeing with him. Life being short, and the responsibility for making up one's mind on important questions being urgent, how long is long enough? This is a matter which everyone must determine for himself in conscience. If to disagree rashly leads to indocility, to agree without reservation, without making the effort to be sure one really knows what is being agreed to, is subservience. Docility demands sufficient *suspension* of judgment so that when I judge I shall be acting in the light of reason, and not in terms of passionate devotion or equally passionate opposition to the author I am reading.

There are a number of factors I consider in estimating the delay of judgment proper in a given case, the amount of effort to understand which should precede making up my mind. One is the degree of extrinsic authority which tradition has accorded the teacher. I should be less impetuous in judging Aristotle and Saint Thomas than in case of some nineteenth, or even sixteenth, century scholastic textbook. If there is a probable correlation between the extrinsic signs of authority and its intrinsic possession, then certainly it is sound to say that the more authority a teacher *seems* to have, the more pause he should give you. This maxim should operate in the case in which you are, for whatever reason, inclined to disagree, as well as when you are favorably predisposed. Here, too, my biography is full of faults. So much of what David Hume says was repugnant to my reason fairly early in my study of philosophy, that I tended to reject him in entirety without due consideration of the extrinsic authority he certainly has in a large area of the modern tradition. I now know that I went astray here, failing through indocility to see the contribution of Hume's positivism for the understanding of empirical science, as through subservience I have parroted errors from Aristotle and Saint Thomas.

The rule of practice must, therefore, be sharpened on both its edges, for it must cut two ways. Wherever I am emotionally, or even intellectually, inclined to agree, I should suspend judgment before concurring, lest I merely indoctrinate myself. Wherever my disposition is of the contrary sort, I should hesitate to disagree, lest I reject without understanding what greater patience would have made intelligible and acceptable to my mind. And, in both cases, my conscience must determine the degree of patience due the author by reference to the marks of extrinsic authority he bears. I must add here that, in addition to the reputation which tradition has conferred, the degree to which I have come to feel his authority because of his previous successes as a teacher in my own life ought also be considered.

This first factor is qualified by two others. On the one hand, I must take into account my own position in the scale of learning. Thus, in a given subject-matter I may have achieved competence to a greater or less degree. In proportion as I have competence—which means, in proportion as I approach peerage with the great teachers in that field—I am entitled to make up my mind more quickly. What would be indecent impetuosity in the beginner may be protracted deliberateness in the learned. On the other hand, I must know myself as a creature of passions and prejudices in order to make due allowance for every sort of waywardness that could interfere with a prudent determination of the mean of docility in this case, as conditioned not only by the author's authority in relation to my knowledge, but also by my idiosyncrasies in relation to the author.

In this process of casuistry, it makes a difference whether I am a student being instructed by living teachers, or at once a teacher of students as well as a student of the dead masters. If I am in that middle position—which should be the position of every good teacher, modest enough to recognize his limitations—the duty of docility is more heavily incumbent upon me, for I have the obligation to exhibit it in my teaching, as well as practice it in my studying. I shall return to this point in a later discussion of the bearing of docility on the rôle of the teacher.

One other thing makes a difference. When I am dealing with the great teachers of the past, I must bridge the gap of time. The continuity of tradition is not perfect. I must be deeply conscious of my own place in cultural time, in order to realize that the author I am reading lived and thought in a different climate of opinion. If my cultural location confers certain advantages on me, I am not indocile if I take advantage of the superiority which modern birth gives me over the greatest teachers of the ancient and medieval past. If I exaggerate that advantage, I am, of course, lacking in true docility; but a vicious subservience results equally from minimizing it.

This last point raises the whole question about the dependence of docility, in an individual teacher, in an educational system, or in a whole culture, upon the cultivation of an historical sense—a sense of the present as moving into the future, as well as a sense of the present growing out of the past. This point, too, I shall discuss in a subsequent article.

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Gandhi and His Escapes

Apparent eccentricities are described and given their deliberate religious reasons by a Hindu friend and secretary.

By Sri Mahadev Desai

"LIFE IS itself an escape of the spirit into flesh and back again," says Mr. Yeats-Brown in one of his books. But in the language of the Upanishads (Hindu Scriptures) it is the striving of the spirit to escape from the unreal to the real, from darkness to light and from death to immortality. It is only escapes of this kind which contribute something real to the world's happiness—not the escapes that figure largely in stories of thrills and adventures. And if one were to examine Gandhi's life closely one would find that it is full of escapes of that ennobling type rather than of the romantically thrilling type.

Most of us seek escape from the cares of city life, or the grinding monotony of six days' office routine by some kind of game, or going out riding, or spending the week-end in the country. Gandhiji, so far as I know, had no such escapes. But he made walking several miles to and from his office in Johannesburg a daily escape from the monotony of the office routine.

But as the cares of the community there began to occupy more and more of his time, he began to think furiously how to shape his future life. He had made a name as a successful barrister and attorney and had begun to make a name as the trusted tribune of his people. As the work for the community began to absorb almost the whole of his time, he sacrificed the practice, but there were other "escapes," or withdrawals, necessary if he was to do full justice to the work that claimed him.

Celibacy was one escape; *aparigraha,* or divesting himself of all ownership, was another. These in turn became the open sesame for all his future escapes. Of these, one that has played such a large part in his life was also discovered in South Africa: I mean the escape of fasting.

Pledged to *shimsa* and having in his charge an ever-increasing family of boys and girls and grown-up men and women, he had no means of correcting them when any of them happened to go wrong. He had the remedy of love. But love in its mildest forms would often be mistaken as weakness. Love which scorches and also purifies had not yet been tried. It was thus that fasting came in.

Its principal function, when first used in South Africa, and whenever it has been used in India (in the Ashram at Sabaramati at the time of the first Labor Strike in 1917; after the Ahmedadbad riots in 1919; in Bombay after the rioting on the occasion of the Prince of Wales's visit in 1921; in Delhi after the series of Hindu-Muslim riots in 1924; in the Ashram again in 1927; in Yearwada Prison in 1934) has been to serve as an outlet, an escape for agony which he could not contain within himself.

But corrective purpose was always secondary, the primary one was the escape—the seeking of relief from the torment of having to see a dear one in the wrong, of having to see one's own countrymen retarding the nation's progress by violence and by internecine feuds, of having to see one's own co-religionists imperiling the existence of their own religion by regarding their own kith and kin as outcastes.

"Was not the purpose mainly one of self-purification?" it will be asked. The object was certainly self-purification, as indeed Gandhiji put it time and again. All escapes of a *Satyagrahi* (civil register) are in the ultimate analysis processes not of hiding oneself or self-protection, but of self-purifications—unless, of course, they may be in the highest spiritual sense hiding oneself in "the Rock of Ages cleft for Me."

There were minor escapes evolved during his perpetual experiments in truth and *ahimsa*. The glare of publicity was blinding, and the love of friends and admirers was always overwhelming. The escape of *aparigraha* (non-possession) helped a great deal, but there was still another withdrawal needed to escape from the ministrations of inopportune hosts.

He happened to be the guest of Shri Bhupendranath Bose in Calcutta when he visited that city in 1915. Gandhi was known for his partiality for fruits and nuts. How else could his kind host express the volume and warmth of his hospitality but by covering his table with all the choicest fruits and nuts available in the Calcutta market? Gandhiji thought deeply over this menace of overflowing affection. His vow to eat not more than five articles, cooked or uncooked, during the whole day was found as a safe escape. It has served him during all these years better than the costliest medicines or the most painstaking doctors or the

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most affectionate attendants could serve him. It has served him alike in health and disease, alike at home and abroad, and it has been principally responsible for keeping him fit to guide the destinies of our nation so long.

Silence, I believe, was first taken up at the time of the Bombay riots in 1921. It came along with fasting, and it seemed to provide a very effective form of escape from the attentions of visitors and interviewers and hence became a regular Monday routine.

Repeated exercise of silence revealed its spiritual quality, so much so that of late years he has derived his soul's sustenance out of it, and has been happiest when left alone. The longest period for which he has kept it is something like two months or a little more, but he would gladly take it, if he could possibly do so, until the end of his earthly existence.

Yet another of his ways of escape is his decision to lead an *"al fresco"* life. No public leader of the present day, here or elsewhere, has been known to live out in the open to the extent that Gandhiji does. But having to lead country-shaking movements and to deal with millions of men he could not do otherwise. He has thus become the despair of the C.I.D. people. He reveals his plans in a more glaring way than the cleverest C.I.D. people can ever reveal them.

The breath of scandal has not spared even men like Gladstone who led blameless lives. Why not then live all the twenty-four hours in the open, even to the point of shocking informality? Evil and envious eyes have seen ill where there was none! Why not thus open oneself inside out, even to the point of shocking tender susceptibilities? An ordinary escape in its very nature involves hiding oneself where people cannot see you. Gandhiji has sought an extraordinary kind of escape by exposing himself out in the open where the world may see him past satiety.

When the eternal public gaze does at times suffocate even him and the escape of silence does not sufficiently protect him, he literally escapes into the bath, the only luxury that he allows himself. There he keeps lying in the tub for close on an hour, often having a sound sleep in refreshing warm water, and sometimes reading important correspondence or some book he must read but never finds time to outside. Once in the bath he can keep even the President of the Congress waiting with impunity. That is the only form of escape which gives him a little privacy and rest nowadays.

A rather startling form of escape was adopted by Gandhi towards the close of 1934. It was retirement from the Congress not only as active member of the Working Committee but even as an ordinary member. The intention was to lift what he described as the deadweight of his influence off the members of the Congress who parroted truths and non-evidence without believing in them and who but for him would strike a departure of their own.

What principally moved him to take the step was, however, the desire to escape from the fetid atmosphere of unreality and even hypocrisy that was fast being fostered in the Congress. The effect of the decision was profound. Attempts were made to alter the creed and policy of the Congress, but those who believed in them became more active and wideawake and have kept the flag of high principles still flying.

Visitors in Bardoli asked Gandhi if he had decided to come back to Gujarat. "Oh no, who said so?"

"The papers."

"Well, that is a case of the wish being father to the thought. But why should I come to Gujarat, when I know that good work is being done without me? Is not the presence of the Sardar (Gandhiji's right hand man) enough? You must know that I flourish on conflict and opposition, and that is what I have there in plenty."

Gandhiji's ways of escape are not easy; they are deliberately hard and he derives all the inspiration and adventure from those hard ways of escape.

The Borsodis

Ideologies and practice at Suffern —and a few reflections elsewhere.

***By* Harry Lorin Binsse**

THE FIRST TIME I can remember hearing of Ralph Borsodi was in the brave, bold days of the deep depression—about 1931 or 1932. It was a time when Americans were not afraid of ideas, because few of them realized what ideas can do if translated into actions. The liberals of the time were all terribly impressed with the nobility of the "Russian experiment" and

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never gave a thought to the price that experiment had cost in terms of human suffering, of death, of destruction. Some who didn't like the goings-on in the Kremlin thought it perfectly safe to explore the literature of fascism and to take it seriously, as a conceivable good way out. Those whose minds were less conscious of Europe were ready to whoop up the ideas of Howard Scott. The New Deal was on the verge, and certainly no one can deny that that régime injected more social ideas into American life than had ever been injected before.

Americans are probably now suffering from a surfeit of all that; are inclined to go too far in the other direction. A lot of us realize that those abstract notions we thought so pleasant and exciting to argue about have nasty, sharp teeth, and so we have coined a word of disapprobation for them all: let's banish the wicked ideologies from the earth, and we shall have peace. Which is equally bad in the other direction.

Seward Collins was the first person I heard talk about Borsodi. Seward was attracted by distributism and agrarianism. Borsodi was a man who lived a sort of distributism, not of the simon-pure nuts-and-berries school. He saw the necessity of keeping the good things applied science has given the world. Otherwise home production for use would lose much of its economic advantage. But he saw also the equal necessity of doing away with the bad things that applied science had made possible: monopolies, slums, large scale industrialization, terrible extremes of wealth and poverty. Collins went to see Borsodi and was tremendously impressed with his doctrines and told me all about it. I remember particularly the effect upon my own mind of just one small thing in his account of the man: his house was built of stone. Now for some strange reason I have always had what amounts to an obsession about stone houses. Life holds no joy for me comparable to living in a stone house—or at least in a masonry house. I despise frame construction. If I had my way it would be illegal. So when I heard of a man who had built in stone and who believed in stone, that man immediately acquired in my mind stature and importance.

Seward Collins later was to lean more and more in the direction of fascism, as some intellectuals unfortunately are likely to, for at the end, like many ideologists, they can see no other way than force to put their ideas over. It is like the liberal who might argue that civil liberties are impossible in a capitalist economy; before we can truly achieve them, we must do away with capitalism. So let us "suspend" civil liberties for ten, twenty, fifty years while we shoot all our enemies and then restore civil liberties when we are convinced that there is no one left to disagree with us. That is the whole trouble with getting too thoroughly converted to a fixed set of doctrinaire ideas in the secular sphere: the more thorough the conversion, the more one is willing to accept evil means to give the ideas efficacy and concrete form. But in any case I had heard of Ralph Borsodi and been greatly impressed by what I heard—even if only for a trifling reason.

An invitation

So I seized with alacrity an invitation to attend and speak at one of the Seminars that are being held this winter by Borsodi's corporate self—"The School of Living." At last I was to meet this person of whom I had heard much and whose writings I had followed for almost ten years. I said that I was predisposed in his favor by the first account I heard of him: that predisposition continued because of his ideas. But there were in my mind many reservations—there still are. For one thing I have never liked goats. Goat lovers may deny it till doomsday, but as far as I am concerned goats smell bad, and there's an end to it. Maybe goat's milk is richer than cow's, maybe it's closer to human milk. But I don't like milk that is richer than cow's—the thought of drinking cream is simply revolting, and one egg-nog once a year is enough—and just because as an infant human milk may have been just what I needed, I fail to see why I need something like it as an adult. I suppose that in many people's minds Borsodi is, *par excellence,* the champion of the goat as a producer of milk for home consumption. He insists that a cow produces too much for the consumption of a single family and is therefore a wasteful creature. My only reaction to that was to wonder whether he had ever heard of pigs as natural warehouses for milk.

And I didn't—and don't—like the notion of homestead groups. Neighbors, it seems to me, are generally (and should be) things that happen to you, not things you pick out for yourself. If they just happen to you, you can take them or leave them. If you pick them out, you have to take them or else make enemies of them. Borsodi is also known for the homestead groups he has established in the New York area and the other groups he has helped establish elsewhere. It is of course a fine thing to make it possible for families to go out in the country and live a life of home production, with all the satisfactions and freedoms it can supply. Also the homestead group can solve many land purchase and tenure problems. But somehow it is disturbing to think of doing that along with a lot of other people and under the protective wing, the almost paternal care of an "Independence Foundation." It perhaps isn't good sense to object, and the objection may have little basis in principle, but the thing itself is repellent in practice. It's just too folksy.

But the School for Living I knew had done

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some yeoman service in making it possible for the likes of me to live a home production life without becoming part of a homestead group. Nor does this practical help in any way depend on ideologies. Last September in Nova Scotia at Father Thompkins's cooperative housing venture near Reserve Mines I saw just how much it has done. Here was a man who frankly said he had never in his life planted a seed or hoed a garden or fed a pig. You would expect his first venture to be long on mistakes and short on results. I can't tell about the mistakes. In a garden they disappear (often all too literally). But the results would have put many a life-long gardener to shame: such a plenty of tomatoes, string beans, cucumbers as you would not believe could be produced by a garden not much bigger than a minute anyway. Naturally I asked how come. And the answer should reward the Borsodis for their efforts. Their "How to Economize" Bulletins had been his chief prop and guide in doing well first shot out of the gun what others had spent their lives doing badly.

Going to Suffern

So the Friday night came around when I was to go to Suffern and see all this in its native habitat. They say there is a bus to Suffern from New York. I don't know because I hate buses. I was reduced to taking the Erie Railroad, which is no treat. The Erie is my pet proof that evil is often not interred with bones. The evil Jay Gould did—and not a few other people—is still written all over it. So after a stuffy, sooty hour and some minutes I arrived at the border of New York and New Jersey, hired myself a cab and was duly deposited on the front lawn of the School for Living, which looks like an up-to-date little red schoolhouse. Friday evening's session of the seminar was under way, its subject "The Crisis in Government—Bureaucracy and High Taxes." An almost anarchistic minimizing of government is part of Borsodi's doctrine. I didn't hear much of the discussion, for it was almost over when I arrived, and I was taken to the Borsodis' home, a mile or so away, for a cup of tea and bed.

Ralph Borsodi is a small bright man, and almost painfully thin. He gives the impression of being either a doctor or a school teacher, and of course in a way he is both. I don't believe he would be happy if he were not indoctrinating someone, hoping that as a result of the indoctrination they will learn for themselves. His energy is only exceeded by that of his wife, which is saying a lot. Just seeing her, seeing the efficiency with which she sparkles in everything she does, explains something that has always puzzled me: the incredibly small amounts of time she allots to various kitchen tasks in her published cost-analyses of home products. I have spent a good many hours cooking myself. Perhaps I am by nature a dawdler and a fusser, but I'm perfectly certain that I would spend more than a half hour on baking a batch of bread. So when you see a Borsodi finding that you are paying yourself so much an hour when you make baked beans at home rather than buy them in cans, remember that that rate of payment is based upon the work of about as efficient a bean baker as I ever saw. Most of us—and our wives—just aren't worth that much an hour.

There are three personal things about me which need divulging because they cast light on the subject. First of all I'm very hard to get up in the morning. Then I have a fairly constant cough, which my doctor and I attribute to the New York climate. And I weigh too much. All three of these phenomena made their impact upon the Borsodis. Of the first I am sure they were quite unconscious, because the means of awakening guests in their house is a police whistle. It can work wonders, especially if the guest is unprepared for it. The cough and the fat elicited from Mrs. Borsodi what I am sure is very wise advice. The trouble is that I am altogether too lazy and inefficient to benefit from it. She told me that both could be cured by diet—by careful and systematic investigation of what I eat and its effects upon me. I said I didn't see what that had to do with a sinus infection, and was properly put in my place for saying anything so silly. Mrs. Borsodi went on to express her horror at the fact that the monks in a monastery she had visited eat white bread when they raise their own wheat and could so easily have whole wheat. She had spoken to the abbot about it, and he had suggested she pay a visit to the bakery in the neighboring convent whence came the bread. But it proved much harder to convince the sister who did the baking than it had been to convince the abbot. She hoped that by now the community was no longer endangering its health by eating bread with all the life milled out of it.

All this, of course, betweenwhiles. Saturday morning I had my speech to make on the crisis in ethics, and there was the long and good discussion that followed it. And then there was lunch. If that was a specimen of a Borsodi diet, I am all for it—provided I don't have to figure it out for myself. And then there was another taxi to the station and another dose of Erie.

The stone house was true. So were the goats and the homestead group, which still doesn't appeal to me in spite of practical advantages. But more than all this there were two people with much to say that is in fact independent of any formula of ideas—apart from the essential need for human independence and dignity—and also much that leads to criticism of the world as it is and points to ways in which that world can be bettered. And if people don't listen, it isn't the fault of the Borsodis.

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Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

THE CIVIL LIBERTIES COMMITTEE is joining with all its well known energy and its wealth of practical experience in publicity and propaganda in the fight against the McLaughlin Bill which is to come up in the Assembly at Albany this week. This bill would permit the absence of pupils from attendance in the tax-supported public schools for religious observances and religious instruction, under rules to be established by the Commissioner of Education for the State of New York. At present, under a rule adopted some time ago by the Board of Regents, local school officials may excuse children for not more than one hour a week at the close of a session for religious instruction. The McLaughlin Bill would legalize the existing administrative rule. According to the digest of the bill provided by the Civil Liberties Committee "it would also remove the matter from the discretion of the local officials, and require the use throughout the state of the release-time plan that is in operation in some communities."

In opposing this measure, the Civil Liberties Committee supply a large number of objections, some of them very practical, relating to the disturbance and deterioration of public school administration and efficiency which, so the Committee claims, would result if the bill is made law. With these objections, this commentator does not feel competent to deal; but the Committee's prime objection to the McLaughlin Bill is one that calls for attention. This prime objection is stated as follows: "We . . . recognize the great value of religious instruction. We believe in, and will defend wholeheartedly, the right of all religious institutions to promote the sectarian education of their members and their members' children. We firmly believe, however, that cherished American traditions require a complete separation of religious education from public school education, and that these traditions are gravely endangered by the McLaughlin Bill." This statement of purpose appears in the text of the letter drawn up by the Civil Liberties Committee and sent to those on its mailing list to be signed not in the name of the Civil Liberties Committee, or any other organization, but individually, and thereafter sent along to the members of the Assembly. If the bill passes the Assembly, the fight against it, so the Committee assures its members and supporters and others as well, will be carried on in the Senate, and if it passes the Senate, the Governor will be pressed to veto it. In the letter which I have received from the Committee, which no doubt is identical with the letter sent to others who are not members of the Committee, it is said that "we trust that you will go along with us, as an individual ready to protest against any connection between Church and State in a democracy."

Well, I think I may say that I have taken a fairly conspicuous part for a good many years in the promulgation and defence of civil liberties, and of the institutions of liberty in general; but certainly I must say that in common with a good many other American citizens I cannot say that I am "ready to protest against the connection between Church and State in a democracy." On the contrary, like many other citizens of Catholic, Protestant and Jewish religious faith and affiliations, I am firmly of the belief that what democracy sorely and immediately requires for its healthy functioning is not less but rather far more real "connection" between Church and State. Speaking now for myself, indeed, I would go much farther than that rather pointless affirmation, for after all, unless you say what you mean by any "connection" between State and Church, when you say you are for or against any such connection, you may be revealing a mood or a bent of mind or heart but you are certainly not providing food for reasonable discussion. And I certainly hold it against the Civil Liberties Committee, in its handling of this matter, that it seems to base its position on merely sentimental considerations, a sort of mood very old-fashioned in the world of today, a carry-over from the mood of nineteenth-century liberalism, which considered that the "Church," by which all forms of religion were meant, was a quaint survival of outworn superstitions, and that, of course, all its influences must be kept away from the public school system, which was relied upon to be the greatest and in fact the irresistible agency of modern American democracy in raising in totalitarian fashion successive generations of perfect democrats.

Well, of course, this totalitarian idea was never applied in a really totalitarian fashion. The Catholics, the Lutherans and other religious bodies fought for and maintained at perfectly enormous expense their own systems of education. Moreover a tremendously large number of American families possessed of the necessary financial resources have always refused to send their children to the tax-supported public schools, not always for reasons of religion, though these played a substantial part, but for reasons connected with social status, and other ideas that are as truly traditional in our country as the idea of religion-free public school education; which, as a matter of fact, is a parvenu among American traditions. Meanwhile, as thoughtful people have regarded ever more closely the social results of the public school education, which costs the country such enormous sums, more and more there has grown a passive public sentiment that the idea of education without religion simply does not work, save to the damage of the very thing that alone makes democracy feasible, religion: a religion based upon principles instilling and maintaining and supplying sound reasons for the value of human personalities as such.

So whether the McLaughlin Bill is a sound measure, in itself, I do not profess to know; but certainly I know that it should not be opposed for the main reason alleged by the Civil Liberties Committee. On the contrary, not alone in New York State but throughout the country the movement to bring religion back into public school education should be actively supported, not opposed, by those sincerely desirous of maintaining liberty in America. The idea that tax-supported public education in which the teaching of religion plays its part is necessarily deleterious

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to democratic institutions and undermines the spirit of liberty was certainly not demonstrated in the case of Finland. In that heroic country, religious instruction was a part of the public school system. And their reliance upon the faith in liberty nourished and justified by religion alone will support the Finnish people in the ordeals that lie ahead of them. The whole question is being opened up once more in the United States, and that is all to the good.

Communications

RURAL LIFE

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: I read with interest John Harrington's letter *re* rural life in your March 22 issue. I note that he seems to be advocating the confiscation of economic rent for public purposes (the Henry George "single tax"). I use this term with temerity as even among Georgists it is anathema.

The vicious practice of monopolizing land to obtain either higher rentals or price was an evil which Henry George saw very clearly; that it is more intense today is apparent through increased population and further pushing out of the margin of cultivation. (Being forced out to poorer lands.) As tangible evidence of this we have the plight of the sharecroppers (tenant farmers) and migratory workers living on subsistence levels while at the same time government benefits are paid insurance companies through the AAA to keep productive lands idle. Something is wrong.

In the March 1 issue of THE COMMONWEAL, in an article "The Popes and Agriculture," the Right Reverend Luigi G. Ligutti clearly showed the Popes' attitude (on land monopoly) when he wrote: "So, exercising the right of eminent domain, the two Popes ruled that one third of the untilled land might be occupied by landless peasants for purposes of cultivation without the necessity for securing any permission from the legal owners of that land." This was in 1484 and 1513. No one can deny that Henry George deserves everlasting credit for his exposure of a great evil in his work, "Progress and Poverty."

The solution (the confiscation of economic rent) has been tried, but with no particular gains. Georgists will admit this, but they argue that economic rent was not all confiscated or that proper administration was lacking. Nevertheless the fact is that it has not accomplished its aim, the alleviation of poverty. It was tried by Count Leo Tolstoy; that is his own version of it. In addition, local governments in Sydney, Australia, and Johannesburg, South Africa. In Denmark it is the form of taxation in the agricultural areas only. The final, best and only test for a fiscal reform is whether or not it will work for *all* of society.

Taking man as he is, just picture the perfect dictatorship of wealth that could be built up with 10 to 12 billion dollars of economic rent annually. We would then have a monopoly of wealth in the hands of politicians to do with what they wished. I'll agree that this situation exists in a smaller degree today, but who likes it? We don't want a slave state. There must be some other way out. Henry George himself only mentions it (single tax) twice, I believe.

Keep up the good work, COMMONWEAL.

JAMES F. CURRAN.

CAMPAIGN FOR PRESIDENT

Brooklyn, N. Y.

TO the Editors: John C. Cort in your March 22 issue wonders how any man who is a Catholic and has read the encyclicals can support the Republican party.

I seem to recall that my sainted father, who was living a noble Christian life long before the man in the street ever discovered labor encyclicals, voted Republican practically all his life; I remember the contemporaries of my Long Island youth and consider that they compare favorably with their Tammany brethren. And lest Mr. Cort protest that he is dealing with party policies rather than individuals, let me add that the various Democratic machines, the existence of which he concedes and which are now operating under the egis of the New Deal, have hardly been torchbearers of social justice. True, they frequently display—preferably just before election—the type of charity that covers a multitude of political sins. For this reason, and because their leaders often possess good Irish names, many Catholic voters appear to think that their shortcomings must be whitewashed on the ground that they are "our own kind." But a few of us unregenerates might be pardoned for feeling that even the Republican bureaucracy is "almost as good," or at least that its record is no smellier.

As for Roosevelt himself, though doubtless sincere in his sympathy for the lower-downs, he is by no means merely the humanitarian. He is definitely the skilled politician, with an eye to what catches votes, and to suggest that he contemplates a third term solely for the purpose of "protecting the poor man's hard-earned gains and saving us from the robber barons" smacks of Father Divinism. Certainly, Father Divine's followers claim that he is God, and Mr. Cort intimates that outside FDR's political creed there is no salvation.

I once read a minister's statement that if Christ were on earth today He would be a labor leader. The reverend gentleman forgot to mention whether the Redeemer would be AFL or CIO. But even this idea is less appalling to me than the announcement that in order to belong to the Catholic Church, which I consider the one true faith, one must endorse the New Deal. RUTH MCCARTHY.

LAWS AND MEN

TO the Editors: Have you lost your editorial guts? Why don't you expose and denounce—instead of reproving—those super-patrioteers Senators Reynolds, Walsh and Representative Smith who are sponsoring bills curbing civil rights guaranteed by our sacred Constitution? (March 29). Why didn't you point out that these odious and un-American bills are unfair to aliens in America? Has THE COMMONWEAL forgotten its duty to defend the rights of all?

AL CAPONE.

(No connection with the Chicago firm of the same name.)

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The Stage & Screen

Liliom

IT IS twenty years since "Liliom" was first given in New York, yet it is today as fresh as it was in that far-off happier time. There are those who brand Ferenc Molnar as a mere technician dealing with frothy, outmoded themes. I should advise those gentry to go to see the current revival at the Forty-fourth Street Theatre, and thereafter make public penance for their spiritual and artistic blindness. "Liliom" is of course not of that realistic school which has all but slain the great tradition of the theatre. It is a romantic fantasy, and it gives the actors a chance to act. For these two things alone it probably is anathema to our intelligentsia. Yet for all its romance and fantasy it is one of the most poignant plays of modern days, and its characterizations are as vivid, yes, if you wish it, as realistic, as any play in the current repertory. But the realism of the Buda-Pesth amusement park is only the atmosphere of something very much deeper, the problem—though Mr. Molnar would be the first to shrug his shoulders at the charge—the problem of good and evil. This problem is not resolved, as it certainly never will be resolved by mortal man, but the dramatist sets it before us in the figures of the good-for-nothing Liliom, and the simple servant-girl Julie, who loves him yet understands him. Only in the last scene, in Liliom's return to earth, does Molnar's skill partially desert him. Liliom's meeting with Julie and his daughter somehow lacks the imagination and the poignancy which is implicit in it. And we are really left in the dark as to whether or not Liliom has performed his good deed, the deed which will admit him into Heaven. It is only here that Molar is trivial. The rest of the play is packed with drama, provocative, filled with pity and understanding.

I saw Joseph Schildkraut when he played Liliom twenty years ago, and excellent as he was in eternals, he lacked the inner spiritual quality which informs the performance of Burgess Meredith. In fact it is to me the finest thing Mr. Meredith has done. I always thought Mr. Schildkraut overdid the swagger. Mr. Meredith is more restrained, but his restraint adds to the power of his acting. The Julie of Ingrid Bergman is appealing and poignant. Physically she is perhaps too tall and in face too refined, but the fact that her acting is able to transcend these handicaps speaks volumes for her capacity as an actress. Helen Shields is perfect as Julie's friend, Marie. Her humor and her infectious changes of mood are delightful. She is a comic actress with a future. Ann Mason does well as Mrs. Muscat, and Arnold Korf as the judge proves again what an accomplished actor he is. Elia Kazan is too New York for the Sparrow. His quick dynamic acting, which makes him a Jewish or Italian gunman par excellence, seems out of place in Buda-Pesth, and brought back longing memories of Dudley Digges's subtle and venomous playing of the part. The surprise of the evening is the revelation of John Emery as a comedian. Mr. Emery's Wolf is Dickensian, a masterpiece of make-up, action and voice. In shot the revival of "Liliom" is, despite one or two weaknesses, one of the delights of the season. We are Vinton Freedley's debtors for it. *(At the Forty-fourth Street Theatre.)*

GRENVILLE VERNON.

Of Dalliance Treads

SINCE Producer-Director Gregory LaCava thought enough of *"Primrose Path"* to make a movie from it, I wish he had tried a little harder to make a good picture. "Primrose Path" may have been funny on the stage; it certainly isn't now. Efforts to clean up the script are commendable, and the plot has been changed considerably; but the film still lacks sincerity in its portrayal of a girl, too wise for her years because of her sordid, disreputable-family background, who cheats her man into marriage and then suddenly and unconvincingly changes for the better. "We live, not as we wish to, but as we can," is the motto (taken from Menander by Pa, Miles Mander, the drunken sot who exchanged the Greeks for gin) but interpreted by the family as "ya live like ya gotta." The story's pathetic grimness, with Ma, Marjorie Rambeau, bringing in the only cash by "entertaining gentlemen friends" in the city and Grandma eagerly pushing the girl, Ginger Rogers, down the path toward prostitution, is doubly stressed by the silly romantic ending.

Deanna Durbin is a grown-up miss now, not far enough out of adolescence to play Ginger Rogers rôles and hit the primrose trail, thank goodness, but old enough to fall hard in *"It's a Date"* for a man twice her age. She takes on her new age very gracefully and, with her lovely singing voice and attractive personality, gives great promise of things to come. Producer Joe Pasternak and Director William Seiter cleverly surround the girl with a competent and understanding cast in Norman Krasna's humorous and human, though somewhat thin, screenplay. As the stage-struck daughter of an actress mother, our charming heroine mistakes for love the attentions of a kindly gentleman. Although she lies herself out of her difficulties too often, she deports herself well when it turns out that the man really cares for mama. Walter Pidgeon, Kay Francis, Cissie Loftus, Samuel S. Hinds and S. Z. Sakall are the capable oldsters who add to the fun.

Miriam Hopkins takes a fling at doing the can-can, but she does all her high stepping for the cause of the Old South. She's a spy. In fact everyone is kept busy watching everyone else because there are lots of spies in rough, tough *"Virginia City,"* Nevada, including Errol Flynn, Randolph Scott and their companions. Humphrey Bogart, with false mustache and foreign accent, is not a spy but a bandit thrown in to give the Northerners and Southerners a chance to fight for, instead of against, each other in a thrilling finale. The fact that Robert Buckner's screenplay is based on an actual Civil War incident concerning Rebel attempts to run gold from the West to the Confederacy, does not make credible its jumbled and old-style melodramatic plot. Oh, no, not today, Michael.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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Books of the Week

Lyons on Stalin

Stalin. Eugene Lyons. Lippincott. $2.50.

THE FACT that it is now smart and profitable to belittle everything Russian is practically the only possible justification for this shallow biography of Stalin. The book is simply a sustained and tiresome attack upon the man who was at one time very popular among the self-styled intellectuals. Eugene Lyons is so indignant at Stalin for being more ruthless than any of the other Soviet leaders that he finds it impossible to do anything more constructive in his book than complain. The keynote is struck in the querulous remarks: "Whatever there was of hope in the Russian Revolution, Stalin has extinguished. Whatever there was in it of moral grandeur, Stalin has leveled with the mire."

Prejudice is evident throughout the book. Only those arguments making Stalin appear to be a human devil are given. Unusual interpretations are accorded to facts in an effort to make a weak biography appear impressive. There is practically nothing in the book that seems based upon original documents or source material of any kind. Anyone who knows anything at all about Stalin will learn no more from reading this biography.

Since the author had only well known material at his disposal, he resorted to unconfirmed reports about Stalin. These he wove into a psycho-history, the most obnoxious and misleading history of all. Of course we are informed that Stalin's thirst for power derives from an embittered childhood. Moreover, since the young Stalin, while at the seminary, received no packages from home, he thereupon decided to ". . . destroy the system and plant himself triumphantly upon the ruins." Such puerilities occur throughout the book. Although the author was not in Russia prior to 1928, he professes intimate knowledge of preceding events, although at no time does he quote from documents not widely known, nor does he make clear any particular avenue of information open to him. One interview with Stalin is stressed, seemingly as adequate preparation for writing the biography. This meeting, apparently epochal to the author, is related in great but pointless detail.

With regard to the so-called treason trials, the author states, "I do not know the answer," and then devotes a chapter to an attempted explanation, which merely makes clear the truth of the statement just quoted. We are told, without a shred of supporting evidence, that Russian communism cooperated with LaFollette progressivism and with the Farmer-Labor party. To clinch his efforts at evaluating the motives of a man he does not know, the author remarks that: ". . . Stalin's biography will be written finally and logically, but not by historians or journalists. It will be written by psychiatrists." Just how the psychiatrists will do anything more than engage in wilful thinking, in the absence of necessary data, is not made clear. It is quite possible that no one will ever be able to write a sound and reliable biography of Stalin, because of the absence of documents. In the meantime, this sustained diatribe of disillusionment serves as a poor account of the life of the enigmatic butcher and murderer, who is, after all, basically nothing more than an amoral exterminator.

PAUL KINIERY.

BIOGRAPHY

Madame Récamier. Henry Dwight Sedgwick. Bobbs. $3.00.

THE LIST of Mme. Récamier's admirers reads like the Who's Who of nineteenth-century Europe. Bernadotte corresponded with her; Prince Auguste of Prussia wanted to make her his princess. She snubbed Wellington and Napoleon. Two Montmorencys, Constant the novelist, Ballanche the philosopher, Ampère the son of the scientist and so many others were in love with her that to succumb to her charm was regarded as a badge of superiority. She had beauty, poise, simplicity and so much ability to bring out the fine parts of those about her that even potential rivals like Mme. de Staël were her devoted friends. Even Sainte-Beuve had a good word to say for her fine taste. She had everything . . . except what would have made her happy.

Her marriage to the cousin of the gourmet Brillat-Savarin was absolutely unmarital. She had no children, and, in the ordinary sense, no home, so that the usual sources and objects of affection were not available to her. She suffered, but her friends benefited. In his declining years the great Chateaubriand turned to her for consolation and friendship and she gave him both with a constancy which he appreciated but was incapable of reciprocating. After his wife died he wanted Mme. Récamier to marry him, but she refused. She had grown too old and her sight was failing rapidly. He died first.

When she was completely blind and unable to go out, her husband's nephew who had worshiped her for fifty years came each day to read to her, and when he found that he read poorly, took daily lessons so that he could entertain her better.

I am not sure that Mr. Sedgwick has showed Mme. Récamier the same solicitude she showed her friends, nor that he has her gifts for exhibiting people like her to advantage. He enumerates her guests, but fails really to explain what drew them to her. To the laziness of his reader he sacrifices the urbanity of style which would have been appropriate. The book is chopped into brief chapters. He hurries from one anecdote to another. His inattentiveness extends even to details of construction; the same phrases turn up again and again.

Mme. Récamier deserved better than this—something of the loving attention of Ballanche, of the discrimination of Sainte-Beuve. The present book is worth reading, to be sure, but the credit belongs to the subject.

W. M. FROHOCK.

The Great O'Neill. E. Boyd Barrett. Hale, Cushman & Flint. $2.50.

THE DECAY of medieval culture in Europe had its counterpart in the Ireland about which Dr. Boyd Barrett writes in this book. In it the author makes an effort to popularize the story of The O'Neill, who was High Chief of Ulster and contemporary and opponent of Elizabeth of England. Mixed as the life of this chieftain was with fighting and plundering, it was romantic and exceptional enough to cause wonder why the attempt to popularize it for American readers was so long delayed.

The author, however, has tried to couple a fairly comprehensive biography with interpolations of fiction and dialogue, and the result is not entirely successful. A more calculated treatment of selected biographical material, in order better to incorporate the imagined sections, would have helped the artistic and dramatic unity. As it is, the

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book varies between biography and romance, and they are not well merged.

Shane O'Neill was the last great Irish chieftain and, while a figure of the Rennaisance, he stood opposed to the dominant personalities of that age of change. A vigorous type, both physically and mentally, he set himself the task of gaining the place of High Chief of Ulster as a stepping stone to the High King's throne. An Ireland sapped by internal disorder, English invasion and late medieval decadence faced him. His purpose, as Dr. Boyd Barrett states it, was to unite Ireland under his rule and to restore its ancient way of life.

That he almost succeeded in the first stages of this effort by defeating the insubordinate chieftains of Ulster and by out-maneuvering the wily Elizabeth and defeating her troops indicates the stature and capacity of the man. This is made evident in the well written biographical sections of the book. The clarity and charm of these narrated sections, however, accentuates the lack of suitable quality in the dialogue. So inept is this that one has the impression of shuttling rapidly from the sixteenth century Ireland, still a medieval country, to the environs of Times Square, and back again to medieval Ireland, as one passes from the mood engendered by the biographical narrative to that which is inspired by the current and marked colloquialisms in the dialogue as well as the form in which it is cast. BARRY BYRNE.

Benjamin N. Cardozo. George S. Hellman. Whittlesey House. $3.50.

THIS IS by no means a definitive and critical study of Benjamin N. Cardozo and contributes little to our understanding of him. It does contain interesting biographical details about Cardozo's early life, and the anecdotes related by people who knew him do confirm our conviction that he is one of America's great men. He was more than simply a philosopher, more than a jurist, he was a great man. When his philosophic views shall have been cast aside as erroneous, and his decisions reversed (if ever) there will still remain the man Cardozo.

In the words of Justice Holmes, Cardozo was a "beautiful spirit," a veritable saint. Few could resist his persuasive charm, his simple child-like character, his ever present gentleness, his mellow kindliness, his deep thirst for justice, his broad sympathies and unflagging loyalty to his ideals. He had an amazing number of friends, but he was a lonely man. His was a brilliant and independent intellect and a catholic scholarship. He was a great common lawyer but with a difference; like his master Holmes, Cardozo was a philosopher—of the pragmatic school. As Chief Justice Hughes observed, Cardozo had added to the literature of American law—and to it substance. But we knew all this before. What we need is not an adulatory but a critical biography; one that will critically evaulate the man and his work. But I ought not complain that Mr. Hellman did not write the book I think necessary, and I thank him for what he has done. J. C.

FICTION

Summer's Lease. E. Arnot Robinson. Houghton. $2.50.

THE WORST offense to the Caises was to be obvious. Their crystalline scientific minds also deprecated anything so vulgar as fervor. Mrs. Caise, who had sacrificed a university career for marriage, always guarded herself from becoming too fervidly maternal. Mr. Caise had the protection of his special subject, Roman Colonial Administration, although he happened to be the curator of a Cornish museum where nothing was Roman. Douglas, the son, was too thoroughly a Caise ever to enlarge upon the pain he suffered from his eyes, but the spectre of Pain was always with him as a little boy when he whiled away the hours that should have been passed at school in the prehistoric department of the museum. Then came an added spectre of Insecurity when he discovered for himself one day how dependent his family were upon the patronage of his uncle, Sir Ernest Land, who was as obviously full of success as of completely obvious enthusiasms. Defeated in an academic career by his eyes, Douglas, after a bout with post-War unemployment, was very willing to accept Sir Ernest's subsidy for the coveted career of architect, but Laurel, a neighbor's orphan, snapped the golden cord for herself with one frank repartee. Laurel then impetuously experimented with a French marriage to brighten a dull job, but this was an acknowledged failure by the time she and Douglas have a "walking trip" together. Laurel and Douglas are as innocent of any faith or conventions as a Cornish cave couple. It is Douglas who finally insists on Laurel procuring a divorce so that they may legalize their status and the author suggests that the final tragedy is thus due to Douglas's inherited weakness in clutching for security as Laurel dies of pneumonia in Paris. In the few paragraphs, however, that compose the prologue and epilogue, we are given to understand that, in middle age, Douglas has achieved another romance.

Douglas's adolescence consumes three-quarters of the book which involves some repetition and a great deal of subtle psychology. His sisters are never brought to life and Mr. and Mrs. Caise fade out as shadows. The happiest parts of the story are concerned with the museum and Mr. Caise's battle to preserve a priceless Cornish knife-dagger of the Bronze Age from the superior claims of the British Museum. The sardonic Allardyce, the prehistoric curator, is one of the most vivid characters and shares with Mr. Caise the true curator's ingenuity in keeping any real treasures from the public's profane ignorance.

Miss Arnot Robinson writes with distinction but, like the Caises, in shying from the obvious, she veers toward implications and obliquities that cause the casual reader to welcome any forthright extrovert emotion.

E. V. R. WYATT.

Hotel in Flight. Nancy Johnstone. Longmans. $3.00.

THE CONTINUATION of the charming adventures of "Hotel in Spain" grows more sober as it goes along. The English couple continue to operate their hotel in Tossa right up to the last few days of the Spanish Civil War. Their devotion to the Spaniards deepens, if anything, and for a long time the Casa Johnstone is spared the ravages of war; what political intrigue there is among the oddly assorted guests is largely of the amusing variety. As the Franco forces close in on Barcelona and bombings become more intense, the Johnstones turn their formerly delightful hotel into a children's refuge. Their experiences with these youngsters are the high spot of the book. "Hotel in Flight" is a rambling, highly sympathetic portrait gallery. It recounts in simple fashion the author's heroic efforts to aid all sorts of war victims; it is more important for its human interest than any light it casts on the Spanish war. E. S.

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End of the River. Desmond Holdridge. Harcourt. $2.50.

MR. HOLDRIDGE'S latest book is a novel concerned with the impact of civilization—so-called—on an intelligent savage, certainly no new theme and one fraught with many pitfalls.

Other writers who have dealt with this theme have more often than not been ignorant of the savage they wrote about as well as his culture. This cannot be said of Mr. Holdridge. He knows the people and country—the interior of South America—he writes about and his descriptions of them ring true.

Mr. Holdridge, however, does not write very well, and a story that might have been a moving one falls rather flat because the author does not possess the fluidity of style or sustained intuitive insight necessary to good imaginative writing. In addition, he has burdened his book with a rather clumsy allegory on dictatorships and democracy, something not even some of our best writers, for some strange reason, have been able to handle well. Mr. Holdridge is all on the side of the angels, but one is glad that the future of democracy does not rest on the ability of writers such as he. HARRY SYLVESTER.

HISTORY

France and Latin American Independence. William Spence Robertson. Johns Hopkins. $3.75.

ONE OF the real pioneers of Hispanic American studies in this country is Professor William Spence Robertson of the University of Illinois. His textbook, his life of Francisco de Miranda and his general studies in the field of the revolutionary period in Spanish America have made him one of the great scholars in a field which is only now beginning to come into its own.

The careful and scholarly work under review is another evidence of the soundness of viewpoint and excellence of judgment with which Dr. Robertson approaches a problem in Hispanic American history. The influence of both Britain and France on the independence of the Spanish and Portuguese speaking countries has been long recognized. What has been lacking has been a convenient survey of the very important influence of France not only on the initiation of independence but on the recognition of these new states. There is perhaps no more helpful manual on the rôle of France during the critical years from 1810 on than this book. Professor Robertson has undertaken to bring together within a single volume the historical background, the place of the policy of Bonaparte, the weight of Hispanic America in European politics and the significance of French diplomacy in the recognition of Brazil and the Spanish speaking states. The book is extremely erudite, but by no means dull. It reflects the turbulence and uncertainty of the early nineteenth century in the diplomatic sphere, which in turn is comparable to the political and military chaos of those years. The author presents an exhaustive bibliography, with a rich array of French sources. The book is published as one of the Albert Shaw lectures on diplomatic history. RICHARD PATTEE.

MISCELLANEOUS

Without Fear or Favor. Neil MacNeil. Harcourt. $3.00.

THE TITLE of the book is taken from Adolph S. Ochs's introductory editorial when he took over the New York *Times* some forty years ago—"To give the news impartially, without fear or favor, regardless of any party, sect or interest involved."

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This is the most readable, most comprehensive book on modern newspaper practice that this reviewer has encountered. And he has, as a newspaperman and as an instructor in news writing, encountered a great many. The book takes the reader from the first flash on a news story through the manifold processes that places a newspaper in the public's hands.

Mr. MacNeil, as an assistant managing editor of the *Times,* writes with knowledge and authority. His knowledge is manifest in his every line. Not only has he knowledge, but he has that high loyalty to the craft that marks the good newspaperman whether he practices in New York or on a county seat daily.

The author writes clearly, tersely and in non-polysyllabics. He has a fascinating story to tell of the "Modern Miracle" (the title of one of his chapters) and he tells it well.

To the person who has wondered how the newspaper reporter, the photographer, the Washington correspondent, the foreign correspondent, go about their various and varying tasks, here is news. To those who have wondered about the mechanics of taking the news of all the world to the public in apparent defiance of the laws of space and time, here is first hand information. And to those who have pondered on the freedom of the press, in view of the stand it has taken on questions of moment, here is the honest viewpoint of an able spokesman for the press.

The staff of the Chicago Daily *News* has taken an unconscious hand in this criticism of Mr. MacNeil's work. Reporter after reporter has lifted it from my desk, glanced through it, remained to read more of it and announced his intention of reading it thoroughly.

CLEM LANE.

Housing in Scandinavia. J. Graham, Jr. North Carolina. $2.50.

BOTH the pervading concept of social and economic rights, as well as their adequate fulfillment, are well served by this book of Mr. Graham's. It is full of data on the experiments and progress made in Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland, in providing housing for those who lack the financial means to initiate their own, independent, home-owning ventures, or to acquire living accommodations in rented quarters. A significant feature is the emphasis placed on the devastating and anti-social evil of high land costs. This is a basic evil, and such exorbitant values, as is implied in this book, are the result of speculation in land, which fosters a housing shortage and reduces the possibility of independent ownership.

While the means adopted in the Scandinavian countries to combat this evil of high land cost are not those of the single tax, what has been done is harmonious with it. In order to prevent the enrichment of individuals from values in land, created by the community, these Scandanavian cities have followed a policy of land purchase for public use in the city environs. As the areas purchased are extensive, this has permitted the free growth of the various cities and a re-distribution of population on this city-owned land, where happier living conditions prevail than in the older quarters of the cities.

The restrictive effect of exorbitant land values on city expansion, therefore, has been avoided. As the individual land holdings acquired from the cities, and privately improved with dwellings for single family use, are leased to the occupants for long terms, speculation in land is also prevented. What is basic in this policy is the belief that man should not be denied ready access to the land, just as his right to light, air and water should not be abridged by unnatural proprietorship. As the low values established in these city-owned areas determine those of the competing, privately held areas, the overshadowing and strangling evil of high land costs, as we know them in the United States, is happily avoided.

This theme is fully developed in the book, not by theory but by example. The pictures that accompany the text are well selected and while the author does not evidence much in the way of literary adroitness, the interest of his subject, as well as the comprehensiveness of his data, offsets what the book lacks in easy readability. It is so pertinent to our own needs that it is to be hoped that it will have a wide circle of readers. Our own, somewhat floundering, attempts at public housing, need the corrective of a fundamental concept, in order to make the effort constructive. This Scandinavian example, based as it is on a more active democracy than we know, is one that could well be taken for a standard, to guide us towards a better fulfillment of the democratic idea, in the basic reform that exists in this field of housing and small individual buildings.

BARRY BYRNE.

The Well Tempered Listener. Deems Taylor. S. & S. $2.50.

MR. TAYLOR chats to his readers as he does to his large radio audience. He avers having edited these comments, made during the intermissions of the Sunday afternoon concerts of the Philharmonic-Symphony Society, but we are certain that, in the rôle of a musician, he would never have permitted the publication of any similar impromptu musical compositions without drastic revision. In the many articles there is, of course, much sound musical advice and many practical facts about composers, orchestras, leaders, criticism and music in general. We are told that there seems little chance of welcoming American orchestral conductors until Americans are willing to become orchestral players; that five percent of our radio programs is devoted to serious music while speakers—sermons, interviews, talks—make up 26 percent (24 percent is popular music and dance bands); that the whole system of musical notation can only be compared to the English system of weights and measures for complete obsolescence. Mr. Taylor's former book, "Of Men and Music," was a good seller in 1938 and the kindest comment to make on this one is what the girl on the subway said to me, "It's easy reading."

E. V. R.

POETRY

Woven of the Sky. Sister Miriam. Introduction by Odell Shepard. Macmillan. $1.50.

READERS who have met Sister Miriam's work in various magazines during the past few years must have been increasingly aware that here was a real poetic talent, a real sensitivity to life and to beauty. So they will welcome this first collection of her verse, divided under such headings as Love, Friendship, Sanctity, Suffering and Death. But as the author herself reminds us in a charming little poem charmingly christened "Border Mystery," this "tenous dividing line" between human experiences is not of the checker-board variety. And Odell Shepard in an Introduction written with affectionate insight insists that the "poetry written by Catholic nuns . . . is always and of course love poetry."

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It is a rather all-embracing phrase; but reading through these particular verses in many forms and upon many themes, one realises that every single one of them is actually an expression of either natural or supernatural love. This does not imply monotony, since nothing is less monotonous than the uncounted ways in which love can be applied to uncountable things and people. It does not even imply that all the poems are of equal merit or maturity—that the critic may not, for instance, find the poet more successful in free verse or quatrain than in the sonnet form to which she herself is evidently partial. But it does insure a largeness and tenderness of vision, whether turned toward the saints "upon God's hills," the "too sensitive person" smarting from life's hurts, the alienated friend, the priest giving Holy Communion or the *Dies Irae*.

There is often a very happy integration of old and new, of tradition and the fresh, personal reaction in Sister Miriam's approach. Nowhere, I think, is this integration finer in its psychology or surer in its art than in her "Secret Is the Garden":

> The furnace of activity,
> The clash of mind on mind, conflicting endlessly,
> Efforts intense and long sustained, that leave no
> time to look
> Upon the beauty of a rose, to read a book,
> To clasp a friend's warm hand,
> Or stand
> To hear a loved one talk—
> The gift of cities and their burden
> I could not bear
> Without the refuge of a quiet garden where,
> Between high porticoes of silence and of prayer,
> God and His angels may descend to walk.

That is the sort of poem to which one walking our troubled modern ways turns back again and again in gratitude to its maker. May she give us many more!

KATHERINE BRÉGY.

The Lusiad. Luis de Camoens. Translated by Richard Fanshawe; edited by J. D. M. Ford. Harvard. $3.50.

THE EPIC POET of Portugal who sang of Vasco de Gama's great voyage to India is known to the average reader much as he was known to our own late poet, Edwin Arlington Robinson, who wrote to Kermit Roosevelt, "My knowledge of Portuguese literature is limited to what I don't know about Camoens." Professor Ford's handsomely produced reprint of Sir Richard Fanshawe's seventeenth century translation may well serve to many as the beginning of knowledge. Since 1655, there has been no other republication of this charming and reasonably literal verse rendering of Camoens's poem. Professor Ford has corrected erratic punctuation in the text and amended certain obvious typographical errors; otherwise the text is identical with the first edition of 1655.

The pleasantly written introduction weighs the merits of the various attempts at translating *Os Lusiadas*, defends Fanshawe against the sneers of Mickle, asserts the qualified praises of Southey and Sir Richard Burton and outlines the history of the book's first publication.

We may take the occasion of this reprint to call attention to Fanshawe's other work, his translation of the *Pastor Fido* of Guarini and his minor poems, the work of a cultivated and witty gentleman. These are not available, except in the seventeenth century editions, and offer an opportunity to an enterprising editor.

J. G. E. HOPKINS.

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LISTED on these pages are the messages of leading Catholic colleges and schools. They will be glad to send you their catalogs. In writing to or calling on schools represented here, please mention THE COMMONWEAL.

The Inner Forum

THREE INTERESTING and encouraging news reports come to us from the South. The first annual meeting of the Southern Conference on Catholic Activities will be held in Atlanta, Georgia, on April 12. There will be discussions on labor and industry in the South, the Church in the country districts where the population is scattered, the Church and the Negro. One of the important objectives will be to work out the local applications of the encyclicals on social and labor conditions and to train leadership, White and Negro, in order to bring the force of Catholic teaching to employer and employee groups. The special conditions prevalent in the South offer a field for Catholic action and that action will have a natural tendency to call the attention of Catholics in other sections of the country to the need of unifying the Southern problems to those of America as a whole. Twelve Southern Bishops have already signified their intention to send delegations to the Atlanta meeting, which will be under the patronage of the Most Reverend Gerald P. O'Hara, Bishop of Savannah-Atlanta.

In Chattanooga, Tennessee, there is being carried on an experiment in local initiative. Thirty-three out of the 40 acres of the parish property will be subdivided into building lots and 75 homes will be constructed thereon for the parishioners. The houses will be financed through FHA loans.

A definite change for the better is noticeable in inter-faith relations in the South. Dedicating a new church at Wake Forest, the seat of the leading Baptist college in the state of North Carolina, Catholic Bishop McGuinness of Raleigh said: "We are here to strengthen the faith in our own people and to extend the hand of friendship and charity to others." And the Raleigh *News and Observer,* which is published by Josephus Daniels with his son Jonathan Daniels as editor, commented: "Wake Forest College has not changed its nature. It is still a Baptist institution. Apparently the innovation" (of the new Catholic Church) "was received cordially by all concerned. That is as it should be. Baptists and Catholics now have an opportunity to practice both religious liberty and brotherly love at Wake Forest."

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